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## CIC BULLETIN

NEWS FROM DC CORRECTIONS INFORMATION COUNCIL

### Message from CIC Executive Director



Happy New Year!!! I am excited to begin a new year with new opportunities, new possibilities, and fresh approaches and ideas. With a little more than 60 days on the job, it is an understatement to say that I am still in the learning stage. In the past 30 days I have had meetings to introduce myself to the Directors and senior staff at the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and the Department of Corrections (DOC). Additionally, I have met with Councilmember Charles Allen, chairperson of the City Council Judiciary Committee, and his committee staff. Each talk was constructive and cordial. During the meetings, District and federal partners expressed their commitment to honor our historical relationships while seeking innovative ways to take our collaborations to the next level.

I also met with representatives from the nonprofit and advocacy communities, such as Rabbi Charles Feinberg and Isa Mirza from the Interfaith Action for Human Rights and Louis Sawyer from the DC Reentry Task Force. These meetings were also helpful and informative. Every interaction afforded me the opportunity to meet with leadership and familiarize myself with their work, while simultaneously identifying areas of mutual concern. I am enthusiastic about strengthening our relationships as we progress into 2019.

The CIC held its most recent monthly open meeting on January 3, 2019 at 6pm, which included current board members, CIC leadership and staff, and interested guests from the public. Newly appointed board members, Nkechi Taifa and Charlie Whitaker, were also present. During the meeting, all attendees were able to familiarize themselves with the accomplishments of the CIC, as well as challenges

reporting format with the goal of communicating the findings from our inspections in a timelier manner to the BOP, DOC, and the public. Within the coming month, the CIC will be issuing reports to government partners and the community at-large.

I have also selected Kareem McCraney as a new Program Analyst for the CIC. He will be responsible for monitoring the treatment of youth who are within BOP custody as guided by the Youth Rehabilitation Act. I have high expectations for Kareem, and I am glad to have welcomed a returning citizen into the CIC family.

I want to thank the CIC staff and our partner agencies for their acceptance of me and their patience with me. I am honored to work on behalf of the incarcerated residents of the District of Columbia, and I am looking forward to working together.

Sincerely,

Donald Isaac

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## Meeting With BOP - Government Shutdown & Hope Village Contract Extension



On January 22, the CIC Board, Executive Director & Senior Staff met with BOP Acting Director Hugh Hurwitz and Executive Staff to introduce the new CIC Director and discuss ongoing relations. During the meeting, the BOP confirmed that there had been no shutdown-related lockdowns in any BOP facilities. While the CIC has received reports of lockdowns since

the government shutdown, it has been as a result of significant incidents affecting the safety & security of the facility unrelated to the shutdown. Furthermore, the BOP provided an update on Hope Village and informed the CIC that Hope Village is currently operating on a contract extension. At this time, the CIC does not have any further information.

forward to working closely in 2019 to improve our responses to serious complaints, increase our efforts in transparency, and validating complaints.

## Meeting with DOC

On January 16, the CIC met with the DOC to introduce the new CIC Director and discuss ongoing relations. The CIC is pleased to establish a point of contact with the DOC and looks forward to developing our relationship to monitor the conditions of confinement for residents in DOC.

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## CIC on Kojo Nnamdi Show - *"How DC Residents In Federal Prisons Are Feeling The Effects Of The Shutdown"*

On Wednesday, January 16, CIC Board Chair Charles Thornton was a guest on the Kojo Nnamdi Show, an NPR radio show hosted by Kojo Nnamdi. Mr. Thornton spoke about reports the CIC has received from incarcerated DC women and men in the BOP since the government shutdown. Specifically, the CIC has received concerns from incarcerated individuals and their loved ones about suspended family visitation and not receiving calls. Attorneys have also contacted the CIC reporting increased difficulty contacting clients for time-sensitive issues.

A recording of the segment and transcript can be found online [here](#).

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## Publications

*The CIC would like to thank our staff, board members, interns, volunteers, BOP, DOC, incarcerated DC residents and their loved ones who have contributed to these reports.*

### FY 2018 Annual Report

On January 31, 2019, the CIC published its [FY 2018 Annual Report](#). The report includes an overview of the facilities inspected, concerns received for both DOC and

### IRAA Inmates in DOC Custody

On February 7, 2019, the CIC published its Thematic Report, [IRAA Inmates in DOC Custody](#), with DOC's response [attached](#). The report highlights the concerns regarding the conditions of confinement received from individuals in DOC petitioning a resentencing hearing under the Incarceration Reduction Amendment Act (IRAA). Individuals primarily reported concerns about safety at CDF and placement in vulnerable positions because of the unique factors considered under IRAA, a mindset difference between those who have served over 20 years in prison as opposed to those just entering into a jail system, and limited access to programming and reentry services in CDF. As a result of the CIC findings, the CIC recommends all individuals in DOC custody who have a pending IRAA hearing should be placed in CTF. Furthermore, the CIC wishes to coordinate a quarterly education session for all IRAA individuals in order to provide updates, answer any questions, and connect individuals with resources specific to their needs.

The CIC looks forward to working closely with DOC to improve the conditions for IRAA individuals in order to ensure a smooth transition back to society. For any questions about this report, please contact Laura de las Casas, Senior Analyst & Liaison. The report and DOC response can also be found on the CIC's website [here](#).

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## Meet New Staff: Kareem McCraney



Kareem McCraney has been hired as the CIC's Program Analyst to focus on reporting on the conditions of confinement and programming provided to DC youth offenders in BOP and DOC custody. You can read his full bio online [here](#). Please join us in welcoming Kareem to the CIC!

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For the third year in a row, the CIC sent holiday postcards to over 4,000 District residents incarcerated in the BOP across the country. We would like to thank the countless volunteers and agencies who partnered with the CIC, without whom this would not be possible. Holiday postcard writing events were facilitated throughout the month of December at the following locations:

- Department of Behavioral Health (DBH)
- Mayor's Office of Returning Citizen Affairs (MORCA)
- The Office of the Attorney General for DC (OAG)
- One Judiciary Square
- The Public Defender Service for DC (PDS)
- ReThink Justice
- The Wilson Building/DC Council

The CIC is grateful for all staff and volunteers who facilitated these events, and thanks everyone who took time to write encouraging holiday messages to incarcerated DC women and men in 2018. The CIC has already received several letters from incarcerated women and men expressing their gratitude and wishing everyone in DC a safe and happy new year!

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## Upcoming Events

**CIC Open Meeting:** February 21, 2019

6 - 8:00 PM

Location: TBA



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